

Message Text

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41

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02

IO-13 EUR-12 EB-07 /089 W

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R 071401Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7324

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 1265

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CT, KS

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IN CAR

REF: STATE 165404

1. US BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS HAVE BEEN FEATURE NEWS FOR LAST THREE DAYS ON ALL CENTRAL AFRICAN NEWS MEDIA. PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT FORD WAS READ REPEATEDLY ON JULY 2 AND 3. AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION AT RESIDENCE ON EVENING OF JULY 3 ATTENDED BY RANKING GOVERNMENT MEMBER IN BANGUI, MINISTER OF STATE FOR TREASURY KOYAMBAWN MINISTER OF STATE NGAI VOUE TO AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER GBEZERA-BRIA, DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND SELECTITN OF GOCAR FUNCTIONAIRES WAS FEATURE STORY ON JULY 4, WITH FULL TELEVISION COVERAGE INCLUDING AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH AND READING OF PRESIDENT FORD'S BICENTENNIAL MESSAGE. FINALLY ALL NEWS MEDIA CARRIED ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOCAR'S ISSUANCE OF FIVE BICENTENNIAL STAMPS.

2. OVERALL TONE OF ANNOUNCEMENTS WAS TO STRESS FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. MINISTER KOYAMBU IN LONG CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR ON JULY 3 EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S REGRET AT INABILITY TO ATTEND RECEPTION (BOKASSA WAS ILL WITH SEVERE ATTACK OF VMUT) BUT ASSURED HIM OF PRESIDENT'S DESIRE FOR CONTINUED CLOSE RELATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR TOOK THE OCCASION TO BRIEF THE MINISTERS

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ON OUR CURRENT AID ACTIVITIES AND ALSO AS INDICATED SEPTTEL

TO DISCUSS SOME OF OUTSTANDING ECONOMIC ISSUES.

3. COMMENT: GOCAR ATTENDANCE AT BICENTENNIAL
HAS BEEN VERY SATISFYING AND OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH LEVEL.
IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT BOKASSA IS CAREFULLY
ORCHESTRATING THIS EFFORT DESIGNED TO STRESS FRIENDSHIP
BETWEEN TWO GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES, WHILE KEEPING A CERTAIN
DISTANCE HIMSELF IN CASE HE WISHED TO TACK IN DIFFERENT
DIRECTION AS HE DID FOR EXAMPLE WITH FRENCH IN HIGHLY
CRITICAL SPEECH JULY 6. (REPORTED SEPTTEL).
QUAINTON

NOTE BY OC/T: REFTTEL BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN INCORRECT.

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NNN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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